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C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 004421

SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: ITALIAN VIEWS ON SECOND ROUND OF UKRAINIAN ELECTIONS

REF: A) STATE 240442 B) ROME 4000

Classified By: POL MINISTER COUNSELOR TOM COUNTRYMAN.

REASON: 1.4 (B)(D)

1. (C) Russia/CIS Office Director Marco Marsilli agreed with US views (ref a) that if activities in the run-up to and during the second round of elections do not meet OSCE/ODIHR standards, the US and EU must coordinate on raising concerns with Ukrainian officials and the Central Election Commission.

Marsilli noted that a meeting among the EU, US, Canadian and Japanese embassies in Kiev was planned for November 18 to assess the situation and determine whether a joint statement was necessary. Italy would sign on to an EU contribution to the statement, and did not plan to issue a separate bilateral document. MFA OSCE Office Director Fabio Cristiani added that Italy would also support a statement through the OSCE.

2. (C) According to Cristiani, bureaucratic obstacles cited in ref b will preclude Italy from sending election observers to Ukraine for the second round of presidential elections on November 21. Cristiani reported that the MFA was on track for putting new financial disbursement procedures for monitors in place by the end of the year.

3. (C) Marsilli and Cristiani did not discount a possible visa/travel ban for officials engaged in or benefiting from corruption or interference in judicial or electoral processes. They did note that this would be a longer-term process than a political statement, and would be undertaken and negotiated in the EU at 25.

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